

Remarks:

Summarizing the amendment, claims 50, 51, 53, 55, 60, 61, 67, 68, 73, and 74 have been amended; claims 46 – 49, 52, 54, 56 – 59, 62 – 66, and 69 – 72 remain unchanged, and claims 75 – 77 have been added. Thus claims 46 – 77 are presented for consideration.

Recognizing that this amendment responds to a final rejection, applicant in it has not altered any of the three independent claims 45, 55, and 64 from a substantive standpoint, so consideration of the claims should not require a further search. To be sure, this amendment adds claims 75 – 77 but they depend from claims already allowed and should not require further searching. The antecedent basis for the proportional limitation in new claim 77 appears in the specification at page 8, line 4.

The amendment for the most part addresses the claim rejections under 35 USC 112. The amendments to claims 50 and 51 should overcome the rejection of claim 51. Claims 53, 55, and 73 have likewise undergone amendment to overcome the rejections of those claims. With the amendments to claims 51, 67, and 68, those claims now specify that the clearance fit between the internal thread of a bearing seat and the cylindrical surface on the outer race in that bearing seat is equal to or tighter than the fit between the internal thread of the seat and the external thread on the outer race. Antecedent basis for the expression “equal to” appears in the specification at page 12, line 15. A difference of zero (0) in the fits means that the fits are equal.

With regard to the objections to claims 46, 55, and 64, particularly as to the use of the expressions “presented away from” and “presented inwardly toward,” applicant requests reconsideration. To be sure, the expressions “facing away from” and “facing toward” certainly convey the same meaning with perhaps wording that is in more common use, but then again the

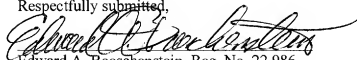
expressions contained in the claims describe with a good measure of clarity the orientation of the raceways to which they pertain, and that is all the Patent Act requires. Under recent decisions of the Federal Circuit amendments to claims have implications that should be avoided unless the amendments are truly necessary.

As to the drawing submitted with Amendment B, applicant never intended it to be entered into the application. It only served to demonstrate and focus on a distinction over the prior art cited against the application.

With the submission of Amendment A in November 2004, the application contained 45 claims, seven of which were independent. Now, even with the addition of claims 75 – 77, it contains 32 claims, three of which are independent. Thus, the three additional claims should not require any more claim fees. However, if the Patent Office calculates otherwise, it is authorized to charge any additional fee for consideration of the amendment or apply any refund to Deposit Account 162201.

In view of the forgoing, favorable consideration and a notice of allowance reflecting allowing of 32 claims – namely, claims 46 – 77 – are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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